

*Congressman King: "We must oppose any effort that would diminish the definition of marriage."*

Washington D.C.- Congressman Steve King (R-IA) today testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee in opposition to legislation introduced by Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) that seeks to promote same-sex marriage by repealing key provisions of the federal Defense of Marriage Act. King was invited to testify before the Senate Judiciary Committee by the committee's ranking Republican member, Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA). King is a recognized leader in the effort to defend the traditional definition of marriage as between one man and one woman, having contributed to the drafting of Iowa's Defense of Marriage Act while serving in the Iowa Senate, and having been active in the successful effort to oust three Justices from the Iowa Supreme Court for issuing a lawless decision to recognize same-sex marriage within the state.

King's statement follows:

*Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank Senator Grassley also, for inviting me to testify here. It's an honor and a privilege to testify before the Senate Judiciary Committee, and I testify, of course, in opposition to S.598 and other efforts to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act.*

*The Defense of Marriage Act passed in 1996 by overwhelming bipartisan majorities and was signed into law by President Clinton. This law defined marriage as "a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife, and the word 'spouse' refers only to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or a wife." This law also clarified that states did not have to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states.*

*Traditional marriage is a sacred institution and serves as the cornerstone of our society. We cannot afford to devalue it with legislation like S. 598 and we must oppose any effort that would diminish the definition of marriage. All of human experience points to one committed relationship between a man and a woman as the core building block to society. It takes a man and a woman to have children and children are necessary for the next generation and we need*

*to pass through to to them the values of our civilization and the family. The U.S. Supreme Court affirmed this in 1888, when it stated, "Marriage is the foundation of the family and of society, without which there would be neither civilization nor progress." In 1942, the Supreme Court said, "Marriage and procreation are fundamental to the very existence and survival of the race."*

*DOMA was passed in 1996 because Congress and President Clinton understood that "civil society has an interest in maintaining and protecting the institution of heterosexual marriage because it has a deep and abiding interest in encouraging responsible procreation and child-rearing." Now with today's proposed legislation, you're suggesting that the government does not have the same interest to protect marriage today as it did in 1996.*

*The other side argues that "you can't choose who you love" and that a union between two men or two women is equal to that of one man and one woman. But these are the same arguments that could be used to promote marriage between fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, or even polygamous relationships.*

*In 1998, I helped draft Iowa's Defense of Marriage Act, that states, "only a marriage between a male and a female is valid." In 2009, the Iowa Supreme Court issued a lawless decision in *Varnum v. Brien*. Seven Iowa Supreme Court justices decided to legislate from the bench. They struck down Iowa's DOMA law. To read their opinion brings one to the conclusion that these justices believe they have the authority to find the Constitution itself--unconstitutional. They even went so far as to say that rights to same-sex marriage "were at one time unimagined." When Iowans went to polls on November 2, 2010, they sent a message to the Supreme Court of Iowa. They rejected the *Varnum* decision and historically ousted all three justices who were up for retention. That included Chief Justice Marsha Ternus. Never in the history of Iowa had the voters ousted a single Supreme Court Justice, let alone the three that were up for retention votes last November.*

*In fact, every single time the American people have had the opportunity to vote on the definition of marriage, 31 out of 31 times, they have affirmed that marriage is and should remain the union of a husband and a wife. 30 states currently have constitutional amendments to define marriage between one man and one woman and Maine passed an initiative to overturn a same-sex marriage bill.*

*Despite the clear will of the people, we have legislation like S. 598 before us today. We also have the President saying that DOMA is unconstitutional, despite no court ever reaching that*

*conclusion. President Obama has also directed the Justice Department to stop defending the constitutionality of this law. It is not the role of the executive branch to determine what is or is not constitutional. It is the role of the executive branch to execute and uphold the laws that Congress passed. Now, I understand that yesterday President Obama announced that he would support the repeal of DOMA. It is his domain to take such a position.*

*But contrary to that position, I think it is clear that the will of the American people to maintain, protect and uphold the definition of marriage between one man and one woman is there and this is good for families, good for society, and good for government. I would quickly add, Mr. Chairman, a couple of points about civil rights. Title 7 of the Civil Rights Act says protection for "race, color, religion, sex, national origin". Those, except for the Constitutional protection of religion, are immutable characteristics. Those characteristics that are immutable should be injected in the discussion.*

*And a marriage license is offered because that's a permit to do that which is otherwise illegal. It's not a right to get married; that's why states regulate it by licensing. They want to encourage marriage.*

*Thank you. I appreciate your attention and I yield back.*

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